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SUBJECT: NSA BAEK: EXPECT NO SURPRISES FROM N-S SUMMIT

Classified By: AMB Alexander Vershbow. Reasons 1.4 (b/d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) National Security Advisor Baek Jong-chun told the Ambassador during a September 19 meeting that all potential agenda items for the North-South Summit were now public knowledge. As a result, there would be no surprises at the summit. Baek thought that a joint summit statement would be 1/3 economic cooperation, 1/3 peace regime and military confidence-building measures, and 1/3 humanitarian assistance, family reunions, and reunification issues. The ROK would provide the DPRK a menu of options for economic cooperation, but the precondition for such cooperation would be denuclearization. The expansion of the Kaesong Industrial Complex was the ROKG's highest economic priority for the summit. Baek emphasized that the ROK will have constant consultations with the U.S. on the establishment of a peace regime. On the Northern Limit Line (NLL), the ROK would stick to its position expressed in the 1992 Basic Agreement, but may raise the possibility of a joint fishing area with the DPRK. On Iraq and Afghanistan, the ROK's continued deployment to Iraq could be easier than providing a Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) to Afghanistan. END SUMMARY.

N-S SUMMIT: NO SURPRISES

¶2. (C) The Ambassador opened the discussion by asking Baek about the state of planning for the Summit. He noted that Washington had been puzzled by President Roh's comments suggesting that he would not have to discuss denuclearization with Kim Jong-il. There was still much work to be done in the Six-Party Talks, and the U.S. hoped the summit would advance progress toward denuclearization, said the Ambassador.

¶3. (C) Baek repeatedly assured the Ambassador that there would be no surprise agreements coming out of the North-South Summit. The ROK planned to emphasize the importance of denuclearization to the DPRK. The agenda would consist of denuclearization, inter-Korean economic cooperation, peace regime, and humanitarian issues.

¶4. (C) The preparatory work for the summit was almost finished, and the ROK was focusing on negotiating strategy,

not new agenda items. Baek said that summit preparation discussions between the DPRK and the ROK focused not on agenda items but rather on procedure, protocol and press participation, not substance. However, the ROK was preparing a draft joint statement that would consist of:

- economic cooperation
- peace regime and military confidence building measures
- humanitarian assistance, family reunions, and reunification issues

While Baek believed that each of these categories would form a third of the joint statement, the actual weight given to each of these areas would have to be negotiated with Kim Jong-il directly.

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

15. (C) Baek said that the ROK would present the DPRK with a menu of options for economic cooperation. The prerequisite for the implementation of these projects, however, would be denuclearization. The ROK planned to press for further expansion of the Kaesong Industrial Complex (KIC). This, however, would require that the DPRK provide a security guarantee for ROK citizens and allow regular rail service across the DMZ to facilitate transportation. The DPRK would also need to comply with international norms so that restrictions on trade could be lifted, thereby enabling equipment such as personal computers to be sent to the KIC. The inclusion of CEOs of leading South Korean conglomerates, who may invest in an expansion of the KIC, in the delegation to Pyongyang would help reinforce this message, Baek said.

PEACE REGIME

16. (C) Baek stated that the ROK would raise peace regime as an agenda item, but that the ROK viewed this simply as an initial move toward a long-term goal. The ROK would have constant consultations with the U.S. on this issue going forward. Baek emphasized that the ROK would follow the guidelines discussed during prior U.S.-ROK consultations on peace regime, and that there would be no surprises on this issue.

DEFENSE ISSUES

16. (C) The ROK did not plan to deviate from its status quo position on the Northern Limit Line (NLL) discussions, according to Baek. However, if the DPRK raised the issue of the NLL, the ROK would offer a joint fishing area, consistent with its prior statements. While the two leaders may discuss the NLL issue in general terms, the ROK believed that the details for implementation should be discussed during meetings between the Defense Ministers, which would then allow for input from the United Nations Command.

IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

17. (C) Because of the recent hostage crisis in Afghanistan, the ROK's deployment to Afghanistan would be more difficult to sustain, Baek stated. However, the ROK might be able to continue its Zaytun deployment to Iraq for another year, depending on U.S. deployment decisions. Baek reiterated that an ROK PRT in Afghanistan was possible only if the U.S. provided force protection.

VERSHBOW